REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 13-24 are pending in the present application. Claims 13 and 20 have been amended in this response. No new matter has been introduced as a result of the amendments. Support for the amendments may be found, for example, in FIG. 1, and on page 11, second paragraph. Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Claims 13-14, 16-17, 20-21 and 23-24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by *Evans et al.* (US Patent 6,690,918). Claims 15 and 22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over *Evans et al.* (US Patent 6,690,918) in view of well-known prior art. Claims 18 and 19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over *Evans et al.* (US Patent 6,690,918) in view of *London* (US Patent 5,590,184). Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections.

Specifically, the prior art fails to teach or suggest the features of "establishing a communication connection between the subscribers via an intermediate provider in the communications system whenever subscriber end activation takes place, wherein the step of establishing a communication connection comprises (1) setting up a communication link between the subscriber and the intermediate provider, (2) signaling the stored ID numbers of the subscriber and the other subscriber to the intermediate provider, (3) setting up a communication link between the other subscriber and the intermediate provider, (4) signaling the stored ID numbers of the other subscriber and the subscriber to the intermediate provider, wherein the intermediate provider allocates a first neutral telephone number to the subscriber and allocates a second neutral telephone number to the other subscriber, and makes the each neutral telephone number available to the other subscriber, wherein a communication link is set up between the subscribers via the intermediate provider" as recited in amended claim 13, and similarly recited in claim 20 Under the claimed configuration, the intermediate provider provides additional anonymity by receiving and facilitating connections between users using specific ID's and neutral telephone numbers.

In contrast, *Evans* discloses a system, where if any two of devices come into short-wave radio range of each other, the devices activate and a wireless local-area-network is established and the in-range devices swap profiles, which are compared to profiles held locally on each device such that a profile match registering on at least one device enables the device matching

the profile to signal the sending device of the matched profile in order to request communication between the devices (col. 2, lines 23-40). *Evans* appears to disclose two configurations: one with Internet access, and one without (col. 2, lines 42-57). When Internet access is not used (col. 6, lines 32-33), users that come into range of one another prompts each device to send a real profile to the other device. These profiles are received by each participating device and matched against request profiles (i.e., what users are looking for) stored on each device. If a match, or a partial match occurs, the device making the match beeps, vibrates, or alerts the user. The matching profile is displayed on the device with an option to contact the device that sent the matching profile. The contact method is disclosed as a page or voice communication (col. 6, lines 43-53). Thus, the profiles are not neutral, since they require the actual telephone number of the user for communication to occur. Also, since paging and/or voice communication is involved, the communication does not occur via a wireless, locally limited network technology. Furthermore, the specifically recited connections between users and an intermediate provider are not disclosed.

Under the Internet-enabled embodiment of *Evans*, a host node is adapted for profile comparison and matching on behalf of the communications devices. A communications server is also maintained on the Internet and connected to the host node, where the communications server stores profile information and enables system extension to remote Internet users accessing the server (col. 3, lines 33-41). Web-enabled devices also allow the profile comparison and matching applications to be integrated into one application that up-links to a central server (col. 3, lines 42-53; col. 8, lines 34-47). However, in these embodiments, *Evans* fails to teach or suggest that the devices store and compare profiles - the above disclosure clearly indicates that this occurs on the server side. Furthermore, as discussed above, the specifically recited connections between users and an intermediate provider are not disclosed.

In light of the above, the Applicants respectfully submit that the rejections are traversed and should be withdrawn. As such, claims 13-24 of the present application are patentable over the art of record. Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case. If any additional fees are due in connection with this application as a whole, the Examiner is authorized to deduct such fees from deposit account no. 02-1818. If such a deduction is made, please indicate the attorney docket no. (0112740-979) on the account statement.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: November 2, 2006